

1 SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 58

2 49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2009

3 INTRODUCED BY

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10 A JOINT MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO ASSIGN A
12 COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF USING EITHER ALL-MAIL
13 BALLOTS OR VOTING CENTERS, INSTEAD OF MAINTAINING A SEPARATE
14 VOTING SITE FOR EACH PRECINCT, FOR ELECTIONS.

15
16 WHEREAS, there have been numerous changes to New Mexico
17 election laws requiring paper ballots; and

18 WHEREAS, voter participation by absentee by mail and
19 absentee early voting has greatly increased statewide as the
20 preferred method of voting for many citizens; and

21 WHEREAS, poll worker recruitment is at an all-time low due
22 to the long hours required with a fourteen-hour-per-day
23 minimum, and the small per diem; and

24 WHEREAS, poll workers are now expected to make decisions
25 affecting voters' rights when deciding whether to issue a

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1 regular, provisional or absentee ballot; and

2 WHEREAS, New Mexico has consistently had problems ensuring
3 disability access to all polling places on election day; and

4 WHEREAS, the financial cost of maintaining separate voting
5 sites for each precinct is out of proportion to the number of
6 voters who vote on election day; and

7 WHEREAS, the human resource expense of maintaining
8 separate voting sites for each precinct is out of proportion to
9 the number of voters who cast a ballot on election day; and

10 WHEREAS, maintaining voting sites for each precinct raises
11 the cost of maintaining compliance with changing federal
12 requirements for voting machines, polling locations, poll
13 workers and disability access; and

14 WHEREAS, the use of either all-mail ballots or voting
15 centers on election day would decrease polling place costs and
16 reduce the number of voting machines maintained, which would
17 result in lower maintenance costs; and

18 WHEREAS, the use of either all-mail ballots or voting
19 centers on election day would help ensure full compliance with
20 disability access requirements; and

21 WHEREAS, polling place use has declined statewide, while
22 county expenses have remained at the same level in terms of
23 supplies and staffing, resulting in a less cost-efficient use
24 of resources;

25 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE

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1 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico legislative council
2 assign the appropriate legislative interim committee to study
3 the feasibility and advisability of using either all-mail
4 ballots or voting centers on election day to contain rising
5 costs, ensure full participation by the voters, provide
6 professional and efficient administration of elections and
7 maintain full compliance and access for persons with
8 disabilities; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the secretary of state, the
10 New Mexico association of counties and the New Mexico municipal
11 league be requested to cooperate and participate in the study;
12 and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that results of the study and
14 recommendations be submitted to the second session of the
15 forty-ninth legislature; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
17 transmitted to the co-chairs of the New Mexico legislative
18 council, the secretary of state, the New Mexico association of
19 counties and the New Mexico municipal league.

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